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PP RUEHQU
DE RUEHPU #0260/01 0362132
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 052132Z FEB 06
FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2288
INFO RUEHZH/HAITI COLLECTIVE
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 0945
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 0791
RUEHQU/AMCONSUL QUEBEC 0385
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J2 MIAMI FL
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0827

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 PORT AU PRINCE 000260

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
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STATE FOR WHA/CAR
S/CRS
SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
STATE PASS AID FOR LAC/CAR
INR/IAA (BEN-YEHUDA)
WHA/EX PLEASE PASS USOAS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [PKAO](#) [KDEM](#) [HA](#)
SUBJECT: CAMPAIGN ENDS PEACEFULLY IN HAITI

1. This message is sensitive but unclassified; please protect accordingly.

2. (SBU) Summary: Campaigning in Haiti officially ended Saturday, February 4. Presidential Charles (Charlito) Henri Baker was the only candidate to hold a mass rally in Port-au-Prince. Front-runner Rene Preval cancelled his planned rally after receiving reports that infiltrators planned to foment violence during the event and discredit his campaign. Other candidates concentrated on media interviews and held smaller meetings with campaign workers. Embassy observers report that technically prohibited campaign activity continued on Sunday, including public address announcements from campaign cars and pamphlet distribution. The government's public awareness campaign continued at full force through Sunday, with the private press also echoing the message that Haitians should exercise their right to vote. End summary.

Charlito has a Party

3. (SBU) Charles Henri Baker concluded his campaign for the Haitian presidency with a rally for his supporters in central Port-au-Prince. Embassy observers estimated the crowd numbered 1,500 at its largest. Based on conversations with participants, they estimated the majority of the crowd was drawn by the Carnival-like atmosphere that included best-known DJ, bands, and alcohol. It appeared that the Baker campaign had paid a significant number to attend, and one campaign worker distributing material admitted she would vote for Preval. The enthusiasm and energy of the crowd dissipated as Baker began his address. Baker repeated his principal campaign themes - order, work, and discipline - and stressed the need for security. (DCM noted that the candidate stressing order and discipline left a large amount of trash at the rally site the following morning.) Baker also informed the crowd that he had just found out that he was number one in opinion poles.

4. (SBU) Observers reported heavy security presence from MINUSTAH, Haitian Special Police, and HNP including embedded international civil police (Canadian and French). The rally also attracted a large press contingent including National Public Radio, Reuters, and several Canadian journalists.

Preval Confident

15. (SBU) Rene Preval on February 3 cancelled what was to have been his final rally in Port- au-Prince the following day. Preval,s campaign manager Robert Manuel told 5. Polcouns late on the evening of February 3 that he had received reports that infiltrators dressed in Preval T-shirts and vocally supporting Preval planned to commit acts of vandalism and foment violence in order to discredit the Preval campaign. They had decided to cancel the rally "in the interest of the elections and the safety of the people." Preval supporters did hold an impromptu rally in Port-au-Prince on Saturday. Preval met with international journalists on Friday and Saturday. He told a Brazilian press delegation he was confident of a first round victory, and expected an "avalanche" of support to develop for in the final days, just as had happened with Aristide in 1990, and with himself in 1995.

Campaigning widespread to the End

16. (SBU) Other presidential and parliamentary candidates conducted smaller events throughout the country. Candidate appearances dominated radio and television news through Saturday. Embassy observers report that campaign activity, technically prohibited after Saturday, continued on Sunday. Campaign workers continued to hand out flyers. Cars with public address systems circulated in Port-au-Prince neighborhoods broadcasting campaign messages. Embassy Observers in Gonaives on Sunday reported that rival rallies in support of Leslie Manigat, who is present in Gonaives, and

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Luc Mesadieu attempted to occupy the same public square.
CARNEY